The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 August 2017

by Martin H Seddon BSc DipTP MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 30th August 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/R4408/D/17/3173748
4 Wath Road, Elsecar, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S74 8HJ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Thomas Brennan against the decision of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The application Ref: 2016/1367 was refused by notice dated 12 January 2017.
- The development proposed is: a loft conversion with rear and side facing dormers.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the building, Elsecar Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Reasons

3. No.4 Wath Road is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling with a hipped roof. It is located within the Elsecar Conservation Area and is situated opposite Elsecar Heritage Centre. The majority of buildings in the Heritage Centre are grade II listed, including the terraced buildings opposite the appeal site which back onto Wath Road, and which were originally part of a colliery and railway owned by Earl Fitzwilliam. The Heritage Centre and railway appear to be a popular visitor attraction.

4. The Conservation Area is based upon Wath Road and Fitzwilliam Street and is a good example of a Victorian industrial village based upon the coal mining industry. The appeal building is of a simple form with a detached garage and rear extension. The adjoining semi-detached house of 'Wentwood' has a timber car port at its flank wall. The pair of dwellings is prominent because of the different building materials, being constructed in red brick with a red tile roof in contrast with the older properties such as 'The Vicarage' and Heritage Centre, which are built in sandstone with slate or stone slate roofs. In general, other buildings in the immediate area have no obvious recent alterations.

5. The proposed side and rear dormer windows would, in my opinion, appear overly large and dominant, unbalancing the appearance of the pair of semi-detached dwellings. Dormers are generally absent within the Conservation Area in the vicinity and they would be uncharacteristic in this sensitive location near the entrance to the Heritage Centre.

6. Both dormers would be built using external materials to match those in the dwelling. The proposed side dormer would be seen clearly from Wath Road and in the context of historic buildings. Despite its hipped roof, it would be a large, visually obtrusive addition to the roofscape of the building. The proposed rear dormer would be visible from the nearby open land at Wath Road and would also be unduly large in its size, scale and massing. The proposed dormers would conflict with advice in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document: *House Extensions*. This indicates that the design of dormer windows should reflect the character of the area, the surrounding buildings and the age and appearance of the existing building.

7. I find that the proposed dormers would harm the character and appearance of the building, Elsecar Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings. The harm to the Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset would be significant and there would be no public benefit from the proposal sufficient to outweigh the harm. The proposed dormers would conflict with Core Strategy Policy CSP30 which expects development to protect or improve the character and/or appearance of Conservation Areas. The proposal would fail to comply with a core principle of the National Planning Policy Framework which relates to the achievement of high quality design.

Other Matters

8. The appellant has drawn my attention to the existence of a side dormer at the bungalow of No.17 Wentworth Road. However, I have no information regarding how this came about and its existence is insufficient reason to allow harmful development at the appeal site.

9. I am advised that the other part of the pair of semi-detached dwellings, Wentwood, received permission for a two-storey side extension. The rear part of the extension has been constructed so that the permission is claimed to be still extant. The appellant advises that the owner of Wentwood is interested in constructing a similar side dormer to that subject to this appeal. Nevertheless, neither the extant permission, nor that intention, persuades me that the appeal proposal would be acceptable.

Conclusion

10. I have taken all other matters raised into account. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

Martin H Seddon

INSPECTOR